

PRE-EMPTION LAW, ETC.

MEMORIAL

OF THE

LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA,

RELATIVE TO

*The extension of the pre-emption right for two years to certain settlers, &c.*

MARCH 22, 1848.

Referred to the Committee on Public Lands, and ordered to be printed.

The memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Alabama respectfully represents, that the wise policy of the government of the United States in relation to the public lands in the passage of the late pre-emption laws, has been owing to the extraordinary pressure of the times, and the derangement of the currency of the country during the last five or six years, partially defeated, and many industrious, enterprising, and meritorious citizens deprived of the means of purchasing the homes intended to be secured to them by those benevolent laws.

The General Assembly further represents, that owing to the causes above named, as well as to the great reduction during that period of every article of agricultural production and of property generally, a respectable portion of the settlers on the public lands in this State, and especially in the Cherokee purchase, have been unable to realize the advantage intended to be secured to them by the several pre-emption laws. Their settlements were consequently offered for sale, but owing to the great scarcity of specie funds, were not sold. They are now subject to general entry; and without the interposition of Congress, it is apprehended that this meritorious class of citizens will be ousted of their possessions by another class, who are ever ready to take advantage of the necessities and misfortunes of the poor but hardy and industrious pioneers of the west.

For the reasons above set forth, the General Assembly pray your honorable bodies to extend the right of pre-emption two years to the settlers above described, and to those who may make settlements, and file their intentions to make an entry in the land office to which they belong in a specified time.

Your memorialists would further represent, that if the quantum of acres of land that is now authorized to be entered was reduced to twenty in-

stead of forty, that, in consequence of there being in many places but a very small quantity of good land, much more of the public lands would be taken up, thereby affording a revenue; whereas, in the absence of such reduction, lands thus situated will be cultivated regardless of law.

*Resolved, therefore, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama in General Assembly convened, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested, to use their best exertions to carry out the views contained in the foregoing preamble and resolution, and that his excellency the governor cause copies of this preamble and resolution to be forwarded to them.*

L. P. WALKER,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

JNO. A. WINSTON,

*President of the Senate.*

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